

BARRINGTON FIESTA FEBRUARY 17

The High School gym of Barrington, Ill. will again resound with the dances and music of many nationality groups during the annual United Nations Festival on Sat. February 17. Many Chicago groups and a German group from Rheinlander, Mo., who will present a German Wurst Fest with song and dances will participate in this gala fete. The general public is invited.

2nd INT. SDF IN CHICAGO, OCT. 26-27

The 2nd International Square Dance Festival will be held once again in Chicago on October 26-27, 1951. Here is hoping they'll overcome the various difficulties they encountered at their last festival.

REGARDING POLISH FOLK DANCES

By V. F. BELIAJUS

Tho Poland is far from being considered a small country, when it comes to folk dance rhythms it has a greater variety than any other country of even much greater proportions in area. (When this statement is made we exclude Russia, who might have a greater variety of rhythms, but none of those rhythms are Russian but of peoples she over-ran and occupied during her years of continuous aggression.) In Poland the rhythms are Polish, tho some border regions may be influenced by "across-the-border" rhythms, or by the minorities living near the borders, such as the dances of Slask (Silesia) will carry a strong characteristic of the Czechs, a Germanic influence on the Kaszub dances and the Hutzul-Ukrainian influence in the Goral dances of South-eastern Poland. The best knows purely Polish rhythms are the Mazurs, Krakowiaks, Obereks and Kujawiaks. Many folk dancers seem to become amazed at the discovery that there are many Kujawiaks (Koo-Yav-Yak), or Mazurs, or Krakowiaks. The statement made by some leaders who claim reputation, that there is only one Krakowiak, or Kujawiak, etc., the one THEY do as being THE "authentic" and THE "IT" is a most absurd statement.

First of all, Poland is one of the few countries who "ad lib" in their dances, this is particularly true of Mazurs and Krakowiaks. The Mazurs were danced in the North in the territory of the Mazovians to a 3/4 rhythm, the Krakowiaks were danced in the South around the city of Krakow to a 2/4 rhythm. Both are energetic type of dances in their respective rhythms and both were duration dances. Tradition has it that these two forms, with the Mazurs done by the elegant landed gentry (Szlachta) and Krakowiaks by the peasantry, both were endurance dance of marathon proportions—danced even as long as 24 hours without a stop with its leaders calling the figures as they pleased and when they pleased and even if they desired to repeat the same figure several dozen times during the period of the dance it was the leaders privilege to do so.

There are certain steps which are attributed, or classified, as a Mazur step or as a Krakowiak step. However, of late, even such steps have become very flexible and one often sees a purely Mazur figure done in a Krakowiak or vice versa, except that the time is changed. As per example, the "Holubczyk" as done by the folk dancers who do the Krakowiak which spread from New York — it is a Mazur figure. The New York Krakowiak, which they do without any calls, was arranged (please note, it was "arranged") by Bronislaw

Matusz, a pole and an excellent dancer who had the full right to arrange, because the nature of Polish dances is such. He taught that dance to the then (late 30' early 40') existing International Center of New York where all the folk dance leaders of the New York area attended and were taught "all they now know". These teachers were for the most part nationality people and often leaders of ethnic groups. Many nationality leaders took the privilege to arrange dances even tho the traditions of their nation does not permit such liberties. To go back to the Krakowiak . . . the one that emanated from New York is good, it is correct and in keeping with the Polish nature of Krakowiak dancing, even tho no calls are made, for none expect a non-Polish group to go out and rattle off some tongue twisting terms; but to spread the statement that he New York Krakowiak is he "Only and True" Krakowiak is nonsense.

The Mazur, for which the above is also true, has still another subdivision — ballet, where Mazur figures are placed on a higher form and polished with a ballet elan. Usually, during contests, often seen among Poles, the Ballet Mazurs are not judged in the same "breath" along with the ordinary Mazurs, but kept separated. Ballet Mazurs are usually performed to Mazur compositions whether by a Polish composer or non-Pole. The beauty of the Mazur rhythm inspired a great many renowned composers to enrich the musical world with a Polish folk contribution. The various Mazurka dances seen among many European nations, Poland was their original inspiration even tho the dances might have been created in Paris or somewhere else.

FROM MISS HAVILAND IN ISRAEL

Dear Vyts — The flight here was incredible and beautiful above the clouds flying 19,000 above sea level when crossing the Alps. I have hardly landed when I was taken all over Israel from north to south — really Dan to Beersheba to see all kinds of Jewish settlements and children's settlements and even a camp where new people become oriented and sicknesses cleared up before belonging to a permanent settlement. It was a rare opportunity for me and arranged with an Israeli official of the Liaison office for International relief organization.

We had an engagement tea this week which was a great joy because all kinds of high and low officials, sheikhs of the Mosque, Arab and American Franciscan Fathers, Greek Catholic and Greek Orthodox came, the Moslem farmers, Jews from Germany, England, Roumania — all came. The best is always the small intimate group afterward. My records are in the trunk still to arrive by freight so we had no music but I said "let's dance" and we sang a simple square dance tune. Then humming and clapping we did a Virginia reel. A young Jewish fellow got the spirit and sang a Jewish tune which did well and then we swung into "Battle Hymn of the Republic." This was followed by a horra and a simple step by a Roumanian Jewess. Then we got some American coffee and ate together. I remembered it was Hannukah and brought out the special candle holder and lit the candles. It was the birthday of an American gentile in the group and we made a wish and sang for her over the Hannukah candles. The pleasant evening ended with "Auld Lang Syne" in good Scotch fashion. I was happy to be in the American Friends Service Committee Center where all are welcome and where fear and suspicion leave and faith in all God's children can grow stronger.

I look forward to seeing VILTIS. My warm greetings. Acre, Israel.



LA ROBE DU CHAT (THE CAT'S FUR)

FOLKRAFT — F-1105 B:

French. For men only.

V. F. Beliajus

This dance comes from Bigorre in Southern France, where a language, akin to Catalan, is spoken. In this dialect the name for this dance is "Era Pehla Det Gat" and in French it is "La Robe Du Chat" (la robe doo shah), which means simply "The Cat's Fur". It is an endurance contest to see who can dance longest. The steps are similar to Ukrainian Kazatskis. **Formation:** Couples of boys anywhere on the floor, join hands and stoop in a squatting position. Keep shoulders erect. Once down stay down until exhaustion gets the best of you.

Figure I. Meas 1-4 With two hops per measure turn counter-clockwise, jumping on the balls of both feet and in a squatting position.

Meas. 1-4 (repeated): Reverse above clockwise.

Figure II. Meas. 5-8: Releasing hands and placing them over own knees, hop in squatting position turning in place to your own right.

Meas. 5-8 (repeated): Reverse Above.

Figure III. Meas. 1-4 (and Repeat): Join R hands with partner and raise them, first one boy turns under joined hands with eight squat-hops, then the other boy.

Figure IV. Music — Until only one couple remains dancing.

Join both hands with partner. Hop on L foot and at the same time kick R foot forward. Bring R foot under you and at the same time kick L foot forward. With two such changes per measure continue as long as you can.

SADLER-WELLS RECEPTION

The Chicago Dance Council, uniting forces with the Chicago Ballet Guild, sponsored a joint Christmas Tea and reception in honor of the Sadler-Wells troupe of England which is now touring the States. The "Tea" was held at Ida Noyes Hall on December 17th at 7:30. A mad crowd of over 500 arrived, as if coming to a "drag" party. Everyone and their auntie were there. The reception created three questions in the writers mind: 1) I'm sure it must be wonderful on the one hand to feel that one is so enthusiastically received after coming to a strange city and, on the other hand to express admiration for so talented a group who earned an admirable reputation such as theirs — this question rather answers itself. But . . . 2) They had just arrived, tired and worn as they were, with rehearsals and performances the following day would it not have been of greater advantage for all concerned if the affair would have been on a much smaller scale, much more exclusive, where people could have gotten a chance to become acquainted with each other and where dance problems such as exists in these two continents could have been discussed? This was like Maxwell Street on a Sunday. And all the while the Chicago Dance Council people worked like slaves preparing refreshments and washing dishes for hours and hours. 3) If the people who flocked to this reception are members of the Chicago Ballet Guild and close friends of the dance where are they when the Chicago groups are sponsoring a concert? A few weeks ago the Chicago Dance Council sponsored Chicago dancers at the Eight Street Theatre and barely a hundred attended and the council lost their "shirts". Considering these things one wonders when seeing such a mob as at the Sadler-Wells reception whether they belong to the class who run to gawk at celebrities and meanwhile get something for nothing to boot?

Otherwise, this affair is to be considered a tremendous success. Just from observation, the girls of that British Ballet in particular, are beautiful, lovely and charming. And the group, no doubt, merits all the reputation attached to their name. Zereni.



SADDLER'S WELLS IN CHICAGO

Loyd B. Tygett

Probably the most successful ballet season in Chicago's history was the December 18th through December 31st run of Englands famous Saddler's Wells Ballet. With unprecedented international publicity and an advance mail order sale of astronomical proportions it was inevitable that the company should be a financial success. To no one's surprise they also turned out to be artistic and social successes. The partying and lionizing are over and done with, but the performances are still worthy of discussion, especially since they can now be evaluated on the basis of two seasons instead of one.

Beyond question "The Sleeping Beauty" is their best offering. The unique success of this ballet points up their chief strengths as well as their weaknesses. "The Sleeping Beauty" is above all a spectacle, and the low wage scales of theatre workers in England makes it possible for the company to go all out on costumes and scenery. The English have long been famous for training the world's best corps de ballet girls, and in the Petipa ballets (Sleeping Beauty, Swan Lake, Nutcracker, etc.) a well trained and well rehearsed corps is an absolute "must". The fairy tale story demands and the English furnish dancers who are also actors willing and able to believe in the fairyland they must create. The men, aside from Florestan and the Bluebird, have little to do except to partner the girls. Even the Prince is without a solo variation in this production; he merely does pantomime and partnering. At first viewing this ballet is eye-filling and quite satisfying. Unfortunately it does not stand repetition too well. The spectacle seems to drag, the corps members too thoroughly subordinated their individualities to the group, and it is only the differences of interpretation by the soloists that keep it interesting.

"Swan Lake" is a ballet of the same type as "The Sleeping Beauty" but it is less successful at holding the